

Reflections from Shrimad Bhagavadgita– Part 11: Chapter 2, Verses 1-5

(July 11 –July 17, 2018)

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<u>ORIGINAL SANSKRIT DOCUMENT</u>	<u>TRANSLITERATION</u>
सञ्जय उवाच तथा कुपयाविष्टमश्रुपूर्णाकुलेक्षणम् । विषीदन्तमिदं वाक्यमुवाच मधुसूदनः ॥ १ ॥	sañjaya uvāca taṁ tathā kṛpayāviṣṭam aśru- pūrṇākulekṣaṇam viṣīdantaṁ idaṁ vākyaṁ uvāca madhusūdanaḥ
श्रीभगवानुवाच कुतस्त्वा कश्मलमिदं विषमे समुपस्थितम् । अनार्यजुष्टमस्वर्ग्यमकीर्तिकरमर्जुन ॥ २ ॥	śrī-bhagavān uvāca kutas tvā kaśmalam idaṁ viṣame samupasthitam anārya-juṣṭam asvargyaṁ akīrti-karam arjuna
कूब्धं मा स्म गमः पार्थ नैतत्त्वय्युपपद्यते । क्षुद्रं हृदयदौर्बल्यं त्यक्त्वोत्तिष्ठ परन्तप ॥ ३ ॥	klaibyaṁ mā sma gamaḥ pārtha naitat tvayy upapadyate kṣudraṁ hṛdaya-daurbalyaṁ tyaktvottistha parantapa
अर्जुन उवाच कथं भीष्ममहं संख्ये द्रोणं च मधुसूदन । इषुभिः प्रतियोत्स्यामि पूजार्हावरिसूदन ॥ ४ ॥	arjuna uvāca kathaṁ bhīṣmam ahaṁ saṅkhye droṇaṁ ca madhusūdana iṣubhiḥ pratiyotsyāmi pūjārḥāv arisūdana
गुरुनहत्वा हि महानुभावान् श्रेयो भोक्तुं भैक्ष्यमपीह लोके । हत्वार्थकामांस्तु गुरुनिहैव भुञ्जीय भोगान् रुधिरप्रदिग्धान् ॥ ५ ॥	gurūn ahatvā hi mahānubhāvān śreya bhoktuṁ bhaikṣyam apīha loke hatvārtha-kāmāṁs tu gurūn ihaiva bhuñjīya bhogān rudhira-pradigdhān

TRANSLATION

- (01)** Sañjaya said: Lord Kṛṣṇa thus spoke these words unto griefstricken Arjuna, whose saddened eyes were brimming with tears being overwhelmed by compassion.
- (02)** Lord Kṛṣṇa said: O Arjuna from where has this illusion of yours appeared in this moment of crisis? This is not befitting honorable men nor conducive to the attainment of heavenly spheres and is the cause of infamy.
- (03)** O Arjuna do not yield to unmanliness, this is not worthy of you. O chastiser of enemies giving up this base weakness of heart rise up.
- (04)** Arjuna said: O Kṛṣṇa how can I counterattack with arrows in battle, Bhiṣma and Droṇa who are worthy of respect, O annihilator of enemies.
- (05)** It is better to live in this world by begging, without slaying our great and elevated superiors; otherwise by slaying our superiors the wealth and pleasureable things we are bound to enjoy will be tainted with blood.

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Commentary:

Verse 1:

Having heard Arjuna's justifications from refraining from the battle due to the fear of receiving sin for slaying relatives, Dhritarastra was relieved of the fear that his sons might have returned to the Pandavas their fair share of the kingdom and desired to know what happened next. Sanjaya spoke that Arjuna's eyes were brimming with tears. When one's eyes are full of tears, one's clear vision is obstructed and thus refers to Arjuna's inability to see the situation in the right perspective. By addressing Lord Krishna with the vocative Madhusudana indicates that just as He destroyed the demon Madhu in times of yore, and by descending in the royal dynasty as a ksatriya, He would destroy all the demoniac and evil elements which are burdening the Earth.

Verse 2:

The Supreme Lord Krishna desiring to benefit the devotees enquires from Arjuna where has this delusion arisen from in this hour of crisis which afflicts those who do not comprehend the value of human existence.

Verse 3:

The Supreme Lord Krishna instructs Arjuna to yield not to unmanliness, or be overcome by cowardice because it is not befitting a ksatriya and unworthy of him and that Arjuna should immediately cast off this unseemly, contemptible faint heartedness and prepare for battle.

Arjuna was still unable to apply Lord Krishna's sagacious counseling having been afflicted by sentiments of friendship and pity and due to the horror of possibly committing actions which may be contrary to righteousness. Arjuna being unclear as to what is right and what is wrong sought further guidance from Lord Krishna.

Verse 4:

Arjuna spoke to Lord Krishna: “I am not withdrawing from battle out of cowardice but because it is improper to attack my superiors”. This is what Arjuna really meant: How shall I fight against Bhishma and Drona? When it is wrong to even speak of fighting against them, how can I then even consider actually fighting them.

So what Arjuna in fact is stating is why should they engage themselves in this battle being aware of the great sinfulness declared in the Vedic scriptures of disregarding superiors and showing aggression against the preceptor which results in the perpetrator becoming a ghostly demon known as a brahma-raksasa.

Verse 5:

It may be argued that without slaying them it would not be possible for Arjuna to even maintain his own body. So Arjuna is responding that without slaying his superiors like Bhishma and Drona which bars one from the heavenly kingdoms, it would be better to live in this world even on food obtained by begging without causing the death of anyone. Otherwise misery will be the result not only in the next life but even in the present. Arjuna was stating he would be experiencing the miseries of hellish existence. This is verified by Arjuna saying that by slaying elders and superiors even in the present life, all the spoils he would be enjoying would be tainted with their blood. Arjuna strongly believes that by slaying elders he may undoubtedly enjoy some pleasures in this world but these pleasures would be tainted with blood as they are derived from the sin of slaying superiors.

